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STUDENTS
AND
SOCIAL WORK

CD188

for

STUDENTS

by

STUDENTS

BUREAU OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS
TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
BOMBAY

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FOREWORD

It is gratifying to find that students of today are not willing to confine themselves to studies within the walls of their colleges but are beginning to look around and to take practical interest in the problems of their neighbours. This going out of themselves on the part of students to share to some extent the life of their neighbours will, let us hope, not only affect the underprivileged amongst us for the better, but also be a powerful factor in educating the students themselves. For, after all, knowledge obtained through lectures and books is second hand and, therefore, likely to be superficial, while that secured by direct contact with life is first hand and, therefore, will be abiding and real.

The motive, however, in social work must not be the selfish one of receiving knowledge but that of giving oneself freely to others in selfless service. It is as we loose ourselves that we find ourselves. The first requisite for social work, therefore, is selfless desire to serve one's fellow men.

Such zeal, essential as it is, will not, however, suffice of itself. One who would do effective work must have some knowledge of the social evils from which people suffer, their causes and how they may be overcome. The present booklet is an attempt by students who, by virtue of their training in social work, are in a way better qualified to speak on the subject than other students and to tell the latter in what various ways they may carry on such work alongside of their studies.

Owing to our past political subjection, students in our country have become intensely political minded. This is not to be condemned ; for, our first and greatest problem was to be rid of the foreign rule which had been largely responsible for the dislocation of our social structure. Now that the fight for independence is over, social problems demand immediate attention. There is much that may be done by private effort, as this booklet so aptly shows.

Every kind of constructive work, which aims at improving the physical, material and moral conditions of our people, adds to our strength. Such work may not be exciting or sensa-

tional, but it is work of this kind, quiet and humdrum though it may seem, that can ultimately bring life, wealth and happiness to our long-suffering people.

The students of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences have given a lead by placing before their fellow students a plan of action for social work. It is now for such of them as are interested in this type of service to gather together and chalk out a programme to be put through within a definite period of time. Once they launch out, they will find the work itself guiding them step by step, and leading them to new and unexplored fields of endeavour. It will give them joy and a richness of experience such as they can never hope to have from merely pouring over their text-books.

The impact of the West has torn us away from the co-operative way of life on which our indigenous culture is based, and is rushing us headlong into a competitive economy. The more sophisticated among us find it very difficult to resist this change. Hence, it is essential for city-minded students to launch on rural work in a spirit of humility in which alone they can learn a great deal from our villagers who are still steeped in our ancient culture. Money economy has introduced the jungle law and we have to revise our standards of value radically, and to move from the economy of production for exchange, which economy is surcharged with jealousy, greed, hatred and suspicion, to an economy of production for consumption. Only then will the world be a joint family working for each other's welfare.

Students, in their eagerness for change, should not forget the principle of self-sufficiency and its application to every detail of our village life. Introduction of foreign and expensive games should be avoided. We should resist the great temptation to urbanize rural areas. Villagers are the custodians of culture and the city folk have much to learn from them. By their work in villages the students will gain much more than what they contribute. I trust this booklet will provide a useful starting point for student work in villages.

Maganwadi,
Wardha, C. P.
6th June, 1948

J. C. KUMARAPPA

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A NOTE

The Bombay Students' Conference passed a resolution in 1944 urging the students to take to active social work in their spare time. Since the social work approach is fast changing towards a scientific one, the Students' Union of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences appointed a small committee to formulate a plan of action to guide various student bodies contemplating to serve the masses.

The suggestions contained in this book are made in all modesty. They are made by students to students. Even if the suggestions do not achieve much, the mere effort to put them into practice will bring us closer to reality. It will serve to mitigate the effects of an education that has little relevance to our life and its problems.

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INTRODUCTION

The student world enjoys the privileges of youth and education and each privilege brings with it a corresponding responsibility. Today, more than ever before, students all over the country have become conscious of the debt they owe to their land. As young men they must be prepared for tireless work, and as educated men they must prepare themselves for enlightened work. Youth has always stood for energy and enthusiasm, for rebellion and revolution ; but revolutions are worked out not through platform speaking and shouting of slogans, but through silent, steady work which builds up the morale of the people from the bottom up.

The student world has so far found no special attraction in constructive work, which seemed too tame for the rebellious enthusiasm of youth. Constructive work has, moreover, come to be associated with the liberal spirit, and the liberal, as a person, has of late come in for much criticism in Indian politics. He is regarded as a person who has fine sentiments but who cannot make them effective. This attitude must change if students are to make themselves useful to the people. The liberal is a man with a broad vision and wide sympathies ; if he cannot act, it is for us to act ourselves. Our generation must experiment in combining liberal fervour with revolutionary zeal, the liberal's sympathies with a revolutionary's passion, a cool head with a warm heart and rule all with an iron hand.

As an insignificant minority that can decipher book knowledge, there is much that we can give our brethren who have not even had the chance of learning the first few letters of the alphabet. The chapters that follow are an attempt to show what we may give. But even more than what we can give, we can learn. Work among the people will help us contact the masses. It will bring us face to face with that section of our population which we have read about but have not known, that section that does so much for us and for whom we do so little, that section which is truly the nation more than any other. It will bridge the unnatural gulf that has been created between the educated and the uneducated.

A look at the table of contents will show that the scope of work to be undertaken by students includes adult education, health work, playground work, rural reconstruction, labour organization, relief work and socio-economic surveys. It is possible that the scope of work that has been sketched out may appear rather ambitious to some. Perhaps, the plan is not one that may be easily adopted by a student body. But in no sense it is too difficult to be worked out. In fact, many students are already working individually in one or the other of the various fields that have been covered in this book. What is necessary is to organize their effort systematically so that not only the independent and adventurous among students but even their more timid and shy friends may enter this field of social work. Those who would make themselves useful to society and yet have not the initiative or strength to proceed alone will find in this organized and representative effort on the part of student bodies an opportunity to contribute their own mite to the building up of a nation.

The limitations under which students must work are obvious. They are limitations of time, resources and experience. These limitations have been considered, and an attempt has been made to show how even within these limitations there is much that can be done. The suggestions contained in the chapters on playground management and labour welfare are such as may be carried out during the one or one-and-a-half hours of leisure that students may have everyday. The work of the health unit may be done partly during these leisure hours and partly during week-ends, while rural reconstruction work may be undertaken during summer and winter vacations. Each type of work will have to be studied, discussed, divided into convenient stages and planned in detail before it is undertaken. However, these are points that must be left to individual student bodies. Here an attempt is made to outline only the structure of the organization which may expect to put the scheme into practice.

The pre-requisite of such an organization is that it should be strong and efficient—strong in the sense that it enjoys the confidence of students and also that of the public whose co-operation it must seek from step to step, and efficient in the sense that it works quickly and with good results.

The confidence of students may be ascertained through elections. But the confidence of the public can be judged only through actual co-operation that will be forthcoming. This co-operation will be in the nature of financial aid, provision of facilities and guidance in the execution of work. Such co-operation, however, will be elicited only after students have established a reputation for their earnestness and sincerity through hard work.

The attempt to organize a united all-India student body, with provincial and local branches affiliated to it, is a move in the right direction. It will facilitate co-ordination on a provincial or even country-wide basis, though it will be some time before this body can mobilise itself to a point where it may apply its energies to such a responsible undertaking. In the meanwhile, local student unions may try the experiment within their own fields. The following procedure, it is believed, will create a favourable atmosphere for beginning on actual work.

The plan should first be adopted at a conference of students where elected representatives from different educational institutions are present as delegates. After the plan has been adopted with whatever amendments that are deemed necessary, an executive committee should be formed to be responsible for organizing the work for a period of time. The executive will start work by making a classified list of students who are prepared to volunteer services in one or the other suggested fields of work. Then separate committees should be formed for each type of work with a chairman, an organizing secretary, and three other members who have been elected from among the volunteers working in the particular field. The organizing secretaries for these committees will be members of the executive committee while the chairmen will be public men who are likely, by reason of their qualifications or experience, to be sympathetic guides in the work of each of these committees. Thus a medical person will be the chairman of the Health Work Committee; a social worker, with experience in rural areas, will guide the Rural Reconstruction Committee and a teacher, having experience with adults, will preside over the Adult Education Committee, and so on. The executive committee, of which all the organizing

secretaries are members, will serve as a co-ordinating agency under the guidance of an elected general secretary.

The executive committee will also have another important function to perform. It will undertake the organization of training courses for volunteers preparatory to their actual work. In addition to the general courses in discipline, orderliness and punctuality, in first aid and in the need for social work, there will be specialised courses for each type of work. The lines along which these courses should be organized have been indicated at the end of each chapter. It may be possible even to make use of the services of an already existing volunteer organization in a city for this purpose of training unless there are two or more such rival and conflicting organizations in the same area. The courses will consist of a series of lectures and demonstrations given by persons experienced in the field. Here again, is an opportunity to seek the co-operation of the public and establish channels for working together.

Besides the committees for Adult Education, Playground Organization, Health Work, Labour Organization, Rural Reconstruction and Relief Work, there will be a Research and Publications Committee.

CHAPTER I

STUDENTS AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Our rural problem.—India is a land of villages. There are seven lakhs of villages, and 87 per cent of the population lives in them. And yet rural India is the most neglected part of our country. All the knowledge, education and enlightenment, all the amenities of life that modern science has made possible, are concentrated in the cities. Villages supply the life blood to urban areas and receive nothing in return. Thus we have the ugly spectacle of urban prosperity growing out of the exploitation of villages. Villages today are lagging behind socially, economically and politically; the "co-operative spirit" that pervaded the self-sufficient villages of olden times has gone to slumber. Agriculture, the mainstay of three-fourths of our population, is degenerating; there is progressive sub-division and fragmentation of land, mounting burden of rural debt and decreasing yield year after year. With the advent of machines and the influx of cheap foreign goods, village industries have been wiped out. The peasant is idle for a large part of the year. There is an overwhelming amount of ignorance, poverty, superstition, filth and disease. Life is a monotonous round of eventless drudgery; after a day's hard labour, there is no means of recreation for the peasant—nothing which would cheer his soul. A spirit of grave fatalism has gripped his mind. The dead weight of these stagnating villages is holding back the country. No nation can hope to go ahead on the road to freedom, peace and progress, leaving behind the bulk of its population in such a plight.

This is the scale and intensity of our rural problem. It is of stupendous magnitude no doubt, but its solution is a pre-requisite for national progress. The task before us is to see what we, as students, can do to solve it.

Handicaps.—There are serious limitations for students undertaking this work. First of all, rural work implies leaving towns and cities to stay in villages. Students can afford to do so only during their vacations. Then there are the problems of

adjustment to rural environment and of working in the midst of unfamiliar people. But this handicap would be absent in the case of students who hail from mofussil areas, and who come to the cities only for their studies and go back to their native places during vacations.

The other serious limitation is the paucity of time at the disposal of students. At the most, students have holidays extending from three to three and a half months every year. Constructive work demands continuity of effort; hence, this factor will affect the nature of the activities that students may undertake. Only such activities can be undertaken as show some tangible results within a short period of time. There are two alternatives. The first is that students go to a village where some constructive work is already being done by other permanent workers and where they can assist in the work that is already going on rather than start on their own. The other alternative is to create local leadership, to select and train workers who can carry on the work when the students have to leave the village.

A batch of workers.—It would be better if instead of a single student, a batch of five students volunteer to go to the same village. If possible, the batch should include one medical student. Knowledge of music, agricultural processes, village industries and handicrafts would be additional qualifications of value to the batch. They can then divide the work among themselves, one looking after sanitation and health, another after education and so on. Besides which they will have the advantage of a congenial atmosphere of friends around them, and so will not feel themselves to be in the wilderness. In organizing recreation on the occasion of social or religious festivals a group of students could accomplish much.

Some basic principles.—One of the aims of rural constructive work is to kindle in the villager a desire to better his lot and to raise his standard of living. Another aim is to inspire him with a faith that everything is not preordained and that he can change his condition if he chooses to exert himself. "Self-help" is the motto that students should carry to them. Ideas of "charity," "philanthropy" or "uplift" should be avoided entirely. If the work is to be of lasting value, the spirit of self-help should be firmly implanted in the minds of the village masses.

Method of approach.—Utmost ingenuity and caution are needed here because the ultimate success or failure of the work depends greatly on the mode of approach. The villagers are very critical and sceptical of strangers, but once their confidence is won, success is assured. Hence the approach should be direct, natural and practical. Discarding any feelings of superiority, students should mix freely with villagers in their *bhajan mandalies and ras leelas*, religious festivals and social activities. The villagers must feel that the students have something in common with them.

The other fruitful method of approach is the economic appeal. Tell the villagers how they can do something to increase their income. Rouse in them the consciousness of the social and economic injustices to which they are subject and they will lend their ears. Care should be taken, however, not to invite open hostility or antagonism of vested interests. For students, whose stay in the village is temporary, this approach is not very practicable.

The third and the most practical method is to win over the younger generation, by playing with children, talking to the village lads at the students' residence, and by encouraging and inspiring the village youth. Their minds are still growing, they are eager for knowledge, they are ready to change. If tactfully handled, they should respond favourably. Students should seek the co-operation of these youngsters and train them so that the former can look forward to entrusting their work to the latter when it is time for them to leave the village.

Programme.—This brings us to the actual items of constructive work that students can undertake. Broadly speaking, the work can be classified under the following heads:—

1. Cleanliness, sanitation, diet and health.
2. Campaigns against diseases and epidemics.
3. Adult education and literacy.
4. Consciousness of economic exploitation.
5. Imbibing national consciousness.

6. Cultural activities and recreation.
7. Village industries.
8. Studying and teaching methods of making manure.
9. Organizing village youth.

All the above items are not exclusive, nor is the list exhaustive. The local conditions prevailing in each particular village will necessitate many adjustments and modifications. The above programme should be free from the dictates of any 'ism' or party politics, though, of course, the bias should be strictly progressive and against exploitation.

1. *Cleanliness, sanitation diet and health.*—Villages today are a veritable resort for all the dirt, filth and stench imaginable instead of being conducive to a 'sweet country life.' Refuse and garbage heaps are to be found everywhere as no one is responsible for their removal. The health unit working in the villages should have three aims:—

(*a*) The creation of hygienic habits and of an understanding of personal hygiene.

(*b*) Improvement of the surroundings.

(c) Reduction of the spread of disease and its prevention.

There is no system of latrines or urinals in the villages; streets, river banks and secluded corners are indiscriminately used for this purpose. The exposure of excreta contaminates the air, while most valuable manure is wasted. Therefore, the trench system of latrines should be popularised.

Cow-dung is also a very rich manure but due to ignorance villagers use cow-dung cakes as fuel. The same pit system is advocated for cow-dung.

Purity of drinking water is another important factor that should be impressed on the rural mind. In villages, water of the same river or pond where people bathe or wash their clothes is used for drinking purposes. Water stands around wells in stagnating pools and spoils the water in the well itself. The danger of diseases, like cholera and malaria, which spread through water, should

be brought home to them through health propaganda with the help of charts, maps, pictures, etc.

The co-operation of the school teacher should be sought if there is a school in the village. This may be done by supplying the school with pictures, explaining the spread of diseases and by seeing that the teacher inculcates interest in hygienic habits among children.

For a few days at least the students may have to do the work of sweeping streets and removing heaps of refuse themselves to demonstrate the sanitary as well as the aesthetic side of cleanliness, till the villagers themselves, through shame or persuasion, take up this work.

2. *Campaigns against diseases and epidemics.*—Diseases like malaria, dysentery, scabies and hook-worm are rampant in villages throughout the year. Students, during their stay should organize such anti-disease campaigns by taking preventive as well as curative measures, e. g., emptying stagnant pools of water, disinfecting drinking water, popularizing vaccination, etc. The medical student should diagnose simple diseases and prescribe simple household medicines. Actual house visiting should prove to be very helpful in explaining the fatal character of infectious diseases and how these may be prevented.

Village folk are simple and ignorant: they take diseases to be a cruel dispensation of an inexorable fate. Medical treatment is an unknown luxury to them. When some outsider comes to their succour with advice and help, they take him to be an angel. This was the actual experience of students from Bombay, who had been to Bengal villages in October, 1944, to render medical help under the auspices of the Bengal Medical Relief Co-ordination Committee. Peasants are steeped in superstition; they take small-pox to be the wrath of Goddess Sitala, and hysteria to be the state of possession by some evil spirit. Along with preventive measures, persuasive and curative measures should be adopted. Persuasive methods are needed to rid the minds of these villagers of superstitious beliefs.

3. *Adult education and literacy.*—Adult education and adult literacy should be distinguished from each other as literacy

implies mere knowledge of reading and writing. But literacy in itself would never be attractive if it were not allied to adult education. Education cannot wait till all round literacy is attained and hence the greater importance of adult education for villages. Students in the villages should start literacy classes for adults, preferably night classes when peasants and artisans can attend. Other interesting items such as music, newspaper reading, talks and discussions on the problems of their daily life must be combined with literacy courses. Adult education talks may be on a vast variety of subjects—agriculture, sub-division and fragmentation, cattle breeding, village sanitation, rural indebtedness, manures, irrigation, personal hygiene, diet, laws of health, care of the sick, diseases and their cures, social customs like *purdah* and child marriage, costly social ceremonies like marriage and death, communalism and caste distinctions, geography of the village and surroundings, current politics, biographies of great men, the history of India, etc.

Adult education is a means through which students may widen the vision of villagers. Life in the village is dull and monotonous, anything new would be of interest to the villager provided it is not beyond his comprehension. Visual instruction by means of films, charts, pictures, and posters would be of great help in promoting adult education.

4. *Consciousness of economic exploitation.*—This should never be in the form of direct instigation; the consciousness of economic injustices to which they are subject and the knowledge of how their ignorance and credulousness is exploited by the vested interests—the landlord, the money-lender, the tax-collector and the police—should dawn in their minds as a result of all the above-mentioned activities.

5. *Imbibing national consciousness.*—Till recently, the final aim of constructive work was the "Construction of *Purna Swaraj* by truthful and non-violent means." But under the present conditions the objective ought to be the building up of a culturally advanced and economically self-sufficient nation. A new ideology of 'nation building' must run beneath the cover of all the above-mentioned activities. Without indulging in party politics, villagers should be acquainted with

the broad concept of nationalism—through talks on the glory of ancient India, on her exploitation and affronts at the hand of foreigners, and on the history of our national struggle for freedom, and through national songs. Against such a background the villagers should be enabled to appreciate our hard won independence in its true perspective. It must be brought home to them that it rests with themselves to enjoy it in the proper way. It would be highly helpful if the social worker can succeed in making the villagers realise the immense economic potentialities of our country and the enormous extent of our undeveloped resources which nature has kindly bestowed on us.

This is a broad outline of the constructive work that students may do in the villages. There is no rigidity about the programme. Students need not undertake all these activities simultaneously but may concentrate only on a few while many new items may be added later. In every case, they should exercise their discretion in selecting activities, taking into account the local conditions and the means at their disposal.

6. *Cultural activities and recreation.*—Villages have had an ancient culture of their own which expressed itself in folklores and dances. The bards sang the glory of their ancient forefathers and the village priest enriched their mind with stories culled from the vast sources of mythological literature. But these old institutions died through neglect and nothing new was substituted in their place, so that village life, today, has become dull, cheerless, and uninteresting. After the day's hard labour there is nothing to cheer the villager's mind. The struggle for existence has become so severe that self-expression has practically disappeared. The artistic and aesthetic values of life have been lost or are fast being forgotten.

Students should try to instil a new spirit in rural life. They should try to convey a message of hope and cheer through recreational activities such as music, games, group dances, *ras leelas*, dramatics, exhibitions, etc. All religious festivals during the period should be utilized for this purpose. Rabindranath Tagore made some interesting experiments in introducing new purposeful festivals such as the *Varsha-Mangal* (festival hailing

the advent of rains) and the *Navanan* (festival of new rice), at Sriniketan, his rural development centre.

Villagers like to act their daily life on the stage; to rehearse the problems they face from day to day. No elaborate equipment is required for this purpose. Any open space decorated with leaves, flowers and *alpana* and lighted with *mashals* (indigenous torches) is enough for a stage and theatre. The *dholak*, *tabla*, flute and *manjura* may from the orchestra.

Students should organize at least one concert and one social gathering during their stay, preferably on the eve of their departure. The themes of plays selected for staging should have a progressive ideal and a message to convey, and, at the same time, they must have a bearing on village life. In all these performances the fullest initiative and opportunities for self-expression should be given to the villagers.

7. *Village industries.*—Due to paucity of time, students may not be able to do much to establish village industries; however, they can investigate the conditions prevailing in such village industries as are already there and explore the possibility of introducing new ones. At least there is one unfailing industry, *Khadi* which can be prescribed for every village. Students should wear *khadi* themselves; they should also use hand-made products and explain to the villagers the concept of *swadeshi*. The tendency to prefer cheap machine-made goods in villages can be checked by emphasising the significance of hand-made products. At the same time, students should rid themselves of the urban way of life, with particular reference to dress and etiquette, during their stay among the villagers.

Co-operation alone can afford protection against competition for small-scale and cottage industries. Students should popularize the ideal of co-operation among small producers in the village.

8. *Studying and teaching methods of making manure.*—One of the most practical ways in which students may help the village agriculturist is through acquainting him with the technique of manure-making. The methods followed by our villagers are proverbially outmoded and wasteful. A very common mistake

in our method of preparing manure has been pointed out recently. The pit in which manure is prepared tends at present to be more deep than wide. The suggestion made now is that the pit should be as broad as possible and not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet deep. It should be the duty of our unit to study the more recent methods recommended by experts and to teach them to the villagers.

The undesirability of the excessive use of chemical manures has been discovered lately and a new kind of mixture, known as the compost manure, has come to be substituted for it. These changes in the preparation and use of manures are not likely to reach the farmer in the normal course of time. But if students first learn these methods from experts and then carry them to villages, they are likely to promote greater efficiency.

9. *Organizing village youth.*—The last and most important work to be done is the organization of volunteer and civic bodies among the village youth and elders, which will continue to carry on the new ideas and principles that have been brought to the village. The Gram Panchayat and the Rashtra Seva Dal are two such bodies that may be organized for the continuation and growth of the work even after the students have departed. The Gram Panchayat is a body of elected persons who will look after the civic matters of the village. It will plan production for the village,—plan it primarily to meet the needs of the village itself and persuade the villagers to adopt it as far as may be possible.

The Rashtra Seva Dal, on the other hand, is a youth organization with distinctly nationalistic leanings, affiliated to the provincial organization. This organization will not only train its members in discipline but also in citizenship. Besides the usual programme of games, drill, and study circles, the adult units of the Rashtra Seva Dal should be encouraged to undertake the following activities:—

(*a*) Literacy classes for adults.

(*b*) School-going campaigns for children.

(c) Cleanliness campaigns for the village.

(d) Reading room and library.

(e) *Bhajan mandali*.

(*f*) Dramatic and folklore group.

(g) Debating union.

(*h*) Annual adult education lecture series.

(*i*) Yearly exhibitions of handicrafts.

(*j*) Village co-operatives.

Equipment and finance.—Finance is not a very serious consideration for rural work. Physical and mental exertion are needed more than money. Still, the broad items of expenditure are as follows:—

1. *Student's personal expenses*.—Travelling to and from the village, boarding and lodging in the village and other personal needs. It would be preferable if the student volunteering for rural work could pay his own way.

2. *Equipment for cleanliness and sanitation*.—Broomsticks, baskets, buckets, shovels, etc., will be required. These can be procured from the village at a small cost.

3. *For combating diseases* students should carry from the city a stock of medicines which can be dispensed free to the villagers. These should be procured from public hospitals or charitable dispensaries if possible. It may be necessary to purchase some of them.

4. *The equipment for literacy and adult education work* should be taken from the cities. The help and advice of the Adult Education Committee of the city should be sought for this purpose and whatever help they can give should be welcomed. The articles required are adult education charts and books, books written in an easy language, slates, pencils, articles of stationery, etc. A magic lantern and some educational films should be a help in visual education. Students should subscribe for a daily newspaper and if possible for a weekly.

5. *For village industries* only spinning wheels and *taqlis* are needed. Spinning should be an important leisure time activity of the students themselves.

6. *For cultural and recreational activities* all musical instruments that can be gathered should be taken — harmonium, *tabla*, *dholak*, *dandia*, flute, etc., would be of use. Some may be found in the village also. Equipment for games like football, volleyball, etc., may be taken. For indigenous games the necessities can be found in the village.

Student organizations in various cities should undertake the financial and other responsibilities for these projects. The students' unions should initiate the move themselves and give their fullest co-operation and support to the student workers; in fact, it should be the major activity of student unions during vacations. The unions should also seek the co-operation of organizations engaged in rural work, such as "The Central Rural Uplift Association" in Bombay, for practical and material aid.

Training workers.—Before leaving for the villages, students should equip themselves with a working knowledge of rural problems and their solutions. Besides individual training that should consist of reading and study of rural problems, an intensive course in practical training may be given. Students' organizations should take the initiative for this purpose. Before the end of the academic term they should ask students to volunteer for rural work. They should also undertake propaganda work in order to emphasize the importance of rural work. Students who volunteer should be asked to join a short training camp for about a week. The help of eminent professors and experienced rural workers should be sought and they should be invited to deliver lectures on problems related to rural work. No specialization or proficiency is aimed at, yet, before departing for villages students should be equipped with some knowledge of the rural background, the problems to be faced and the way they should be tackled. Some topics for lectures are suggested below:—

1. Rural sanitation.
2. Rural health—diseases prevalent in villages, preventive and curative measures.

3. Technique of adult education.

4. Rural social life—tradition and culture of rural life, social evils like seclusion of women, untouchability, child marriage, etc.

5. Rural economics—problems of agriculture:

   (*a*) Subdivision and fragmentation of land;
   (*b*) Rural indebtedness; curtailing of debts;
   (*c*) System of land tenures;
   (*d*) Seasonal unemployment;
   (*e*) Subsidiary industries;
   (*f*) Cottage industries—their place in our economy;
   (*g*) Place of co-operation in villages.

6. Place of cultural programmes in villages, for re-creation as well as a method of approach.

7. Rural exploitation—unjust social and economic relations—money-lender, *zamindar*, tax-collector, police.

8. Ways of awakening national consciousness in villages.

The above list only serves to give a general idea of the type of training students should receive. The lectures should be strictly practical, avoiding all theoretical controversies and confusions, and rich in constructive suggestions that would define clear lines of action for students engaged in rural work.

Value of such work.—This in broad outline is a plan of the constructive work students may carry out in villages. There are serious handicaps, very real ones like temporary stay in the village and paucity of time. In the face of these handicaps one may be sceptical of the value and practical utility of such work. One may wonder whether anything worthwhile can be achieved through the work of a group of inexperienced urban youth staying temporarily at a village. The doubt is a legitimate one, but there are clear gains.

First of all, it will give students a new outlook and a new channel of thought and action. It will induce a sense of reality and provide a proper perspective in gauging the extent and intensity of the problems which our country has to solve on her way to plenty and prosperity. It will set us thinking.

But we must not miss the other and more important side of the picture. The villages are not mere experimental grounds for us. They too gain positively. Students may fail to change the deep-rooted habits of a lifetime, villages may not become models of cleanliness and sanitation through the efforts of a month; yet the contact should go a long way to stir the village mind, and break the shell of despondency. At first village people may only display indifference to what outsiders may do. Later, they would be curious to know the purpose that brings the strangers and finally they would be positively interested in their activities. During the past few centuries, villages have been left to drift for themselves with no conscious effort to arrest their disorganization. Thus life in the villages has grown decadent; orthodoxy and conservatism have become deeply rooted. Each village is an isolated world with little outside contact. What little they receive from the cities are made up of scum, refuse, vice, crime and disease. The contact is not health-giving. Students, during their short stay, should help to shake off this conservatism, prepare villagers to accept the good things of life that cities can give them such as knowledge, enlightenment, cures for diseases and scientific achievements. Students should be the forerunners of a national policy wherein cities contribute to the advancement of villages rather than have an ugly urban prosperity growing out of the exploitation of villages. Students should introduce a new atmosphere, new and progressive ideas, and a message of hope and cheer. This is the most that can be hoped for at present.

CHAPTER II

STUDENTS AND ADULT EDUCATION

It is a matter of common knowledge that scarcely twelve persons out of a hundred in India are literate. The problem of adult education, therefore, is too obvious to need any special emphasis. But today the phrase, "Adult Education" has changed from meaning merely "literacy" to meaning "education proper of an adult." Literacy is by no means education, and conversely illiteracy is not synonymous with total ignorance. Yet literacy is the key to learning and gives an easy access to education. During all periods of civilization, the purpose of education has been the acquirement of certain positive ideals and aims in whose attainment lies the good of the individual and of the society to which he belongs.

An illiterate people cannot understand and comprehend the implications of democracy and social justice. Therefore, to open their minds we have, at first, to make our millions literate and to see further that they do not lapse into illiteracy. But literacy is only the beginning of education. Along with it, we need to give our adults education for life so that they may live a better and more useful life.

Ignorance gives scope to exploitation, exploitation leads to poverty, and poverty in its turn saps the energy necessary for a fight against ignorance. This vicious circle can only be broken by students if they take up the task with missionary zeal and pledge themselves to see that within a decade the whole nation is made literate.

So far as literacy is concerned, it must be remembered that the term "adult" means all persons above the age of 14 years. A child up to the age of 14 must attend school. It would be wrong to encourage children to attend adult classes at the cost of their primary education, which would be the case if the age limit is lowered. Further, adult interests differ greatly from those of the child, and as such two entirely different types of approaches will be needed. Even for the purpose of literacy it would be wrong to allow a boy of 15 and a person of say 40 years to

sit in the same literacy class. This would encourage a feeling of inferiority and thus hamper the smooth working of the class. Therefore, the adult group of 14 years and onwards should be divided into three groups, if possible, *viz*., adolescent (14 years to 20 years), youth (21 years to 35 years), and elders (above 35 years).

Organization.—It is assumed that students who wish to undertake this work are already members of an existing organization. It will, therefore, be futile to enter into its details. But certain hints, *e. g*., for procuring finances, etc., will be given *obiter dicta* in the scheme.

In an ideal condition, it should be the aim of students to organize a whole linguistic province for the purpose of adult education. But it would be too optimistic to expect such an organization in the initial stages. Therefore, in the beginning, the task should be undertaken by local student committees, or by individuals on their own initiative. The provincial organization will only be a guiding and supervisory body with two distinct functions. They are:

1. Guidance and supervision
2. Publication of suitable materials.

An effort at maintaining a satisfactory co-ordination of work should be made through such means as a separate section in the students' journal,—a section devoted to adult education, correspondence of local committees among themselves and with the central committee, and annual conference reports.

The local committee should bear in mind the following four objectives of adult education propounded by the Manshardt Committee (1938) on Adult Education of the Government of Bombay:—

1. "To enable adults to make successful effort individually and collectively to improve their resources and amenities of life, and to protect themselves and their community from exploitation and disintegration.
2. "To enable adults to adjust their minds to new problems.

3. "To make good deficiencies in education, in particular the attainment of literacy.

"4. To train both for leadership and participation in common life."

To achieve these aims, the following departments will be necessary for the central and provincial organizations:—

1. Propaganda and information
2. Publications
3. Training of workers
4. Supervision
5. Research and experimentation (if possible).

Each of these departments will be in charge of experts who may or may not be members of the organization and who shall carry on the work of their particular sub-committees in co-operation with the student members.

There is so much ignorance in our country that even to whip up the enthusiasm of the people regular and concerted propaganda through all conceivable means is necessary. Through the means of propaganda, students can kindle in the hearts of every illiterate an intense desire to be literate and to gain knowledge. This will facilitate the next phase of actual work. The department of propaganda must be allied to the department of information where up-to-date statistics regarding literacy in various local areas and information of work done by various agencies is maintained. In short, a clearing house of information should be established.

Since our aim in carrying out adult education programmes is to give reality to the ideal of democracy, it is imperative that all reading material should be specially prepared and published by talented students, from a progressive point of view (of course, keeping in mind adult interests). This would serve two purposes; first, the preparation of the exact type of literature needed, thus fulfilling a long-felt want, and, second, the maintenance of a good source of monetary aid for other branches of work.

The training of workers is yet another important aspect of this scheme. Without trained personnel the effort may be vitiated. Intense training for seven days, in a camp, would be sufficient for a start. Later, refresher camp courses, for three days every year, may be helpful.

Supervision and checking of work by local committees is very important. This can be done by inspection with the help of local educational authorities or prominent public men. If possible, some students of the central committee may also be authorised to check up the work.

Finally, it is very necessary to set apart a department for research and experiments where various new methods of teaching adults within a short period of time may be tried out. Experiments on a common script or on the improvement of existing alphabets, and experiments in rural and urban sociology, for the removal of the handicaps of any particular group having difficulty in becoming effective citizens, should be carried out. Research on the learning ability of various groups, should also be undertaken if possible. These experiments will facilitate our work, as our aim is to aid the individual in adjusting to his group and society in order that he may contribute effectively to the welfare of all. Handicaps can be overcome once they are known and, similarly, potentialities can be usefully utilized. So much for organization.

Types of adult education.—Since our conception of adult education is that it is synonymous with life itself—it is obvious that types of education, too, should be varying and varied, such as:—

1. Literacy.
2. Post-literacy.
3. Elementary education.
4. Education for health.
5. Education for parenthood.
6. Education for citizenship.
7. Cultural education.

8. Education in agriculture and handicrafts.
9. Workers' education.
10. Women's education.

The first two types fall in the category of mass literacy campaigns. It must be noted that the establishment of libraries and reading rooms are important and necessary.

As for mass literacy campaigns, it is clear that unless they are very strongly organized, the responsibility of such campaigns will be beyond the scope of students. Therefore, all that students can really hope to do is to co-operate with a Provincial Government when it launches such a scheme. At the most, in case a Government does not launch one, students may agitate and make it do so. Where a campaign is launched, students should only undertake to do the propaganda work through meetings, lectures, posters, demonstrations, exhibitions, etc., and thus gain mass contact.

Independently of the Provincial Government, local units of students may carry on a limited amount of work, through as many types of adult education as they possibly can. The slogan, "Each one, Teach one" should be encouraged. After this, the enrolment of students for adult classes should begin. Materials published by students should be used in all cases where available. In the initial stages, materials based on Dr. Labauch's method should be used in preference to any other. Classes must then be divided according to age groups, as already shown. They would be held in the evening or night. Public buildings and institutions should be chosen for these activities as the net expenses of such classes are negligible, being only in the nature of expenditure on kerosene oil or chalk sticks. The major expenses that would be incurred are the establishing of adult libraries and reading rooms. These expenses should be met through the collection of donations, organization of variety entertainments, etc.

Minimum education should be limited to elementary education after the literacy stage has been reached. The aim should be placed at a hundred per cent literacy in an area within a period of five years. Women workers should conduct classes for adult women. In such classes, subjects meeting feminine requirements may replace the general course.

A wall newspaper should be maintained to encourage self-expression among the newly made literates.

It is quite likely that these students' units working for adult education will confine their activities to urban areas; therefore, we have to consider a separate plan for rural areas. Students as a rule get three months' vacation during which time those who can go to villages at their own cost, or at the expense of public charities, or through the funds of the students' union, should do so. An average of six weeks is needed for an adult to master the alphabet and another six weeks could be utilized for post-literacy work. During this period, students should attempt to create local leadership in order to continue the work they have started and to maintain the reading room and the library, if they have been established. It may be possible to start a reading room or library through the munificence of well-to-do persons. After returning to the town, students should keep in constant touch with the newly-made local teacher through correspondence. It would be worthwhile, during each vacation, for a students' union to take charge of ten villages under this scheme. New villages should be selected each year so that within a period of five years there may be tangible results in the chosen area.

All other types of education are rather self-explanatory, and if further elucidation is needed it may be given in training camps. These different types of adult education will, no doubt, involve the co-operation of already existing agencies like the municipalities, local boards, gram panchayats, trade unions, etc. As far as possible students should not indulge in matters that may be deemed controversial. There would be no trouble if social services are not mixed with politics. Government help would, however, facilitate the work of local units to the extent that the central unit would be able to furnish guidance, supervision and materials.

Method.—There are so many different methods of imparting knowledge that it would be difficult to draw up a really comprehensive list, however, we can group them under the following main classifications:—

1. Through the spoken word

2. Through the written word

3. Through visual means.

In the first category, class room periods, lectures, debates, discussions, talks on current events, forums, music, interpretation of songs, etc., have a place, while books, newspapers, libraries, and reading rooms form the bulk of the second group. The third group consists of films, magic lantern shows, demonstrations, dramas, etc. (Posters and lantern slides can be had on request from the Bombay Presidency Baby and Health Week Association as also from various departments of Provincial Governments).

All these methods are valuable, yet it is a universally accepted fact that visual means of instruction are the most effective. At the same time, visual education is more expensive and it would be difficult for students, with their limited resources, to make full use of them.

Class room methods will not be as useful as discussion seminars. The class room method has come to be associated with child teaching, and as such an adult is bound to resent it.

The cheapest and most convenient method is through the printed word. Once a book is published it can be circulated in large numbers without much difficulty and, what is more, a little profit may also be made through the sales. This profit may be utilized for adult education or for any other useful work. But this means can only be put into practice after a large number of persons have been made literate.

This is a mere outline of the tremendous amount of work that students, if they so desire, can undertake in the direction of nation building. Students of all progressive countries have taken a prominent part in such activities and it would be a matter of shame if we, in India, were to lag behind. Students in India can render no better service to the country than by eradicating illiteracy and ignorance and thus helping the people to become better men, better citizens, and better INDIANS.

CHAPTER III

STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY WELFARE

Students are the young intellectuals of a community. They are the torch-bearers of progress. As such, it should be the primary aim of every constructive programme for students, to inspire in them a love for the community to which they belong. It is necessary, therefore, to train them for leadership, and to make them shoulder the responsibilities of the welfare of the community.

The main aims of this section of constructive work for students are:—

(1) To interest students in working for better community life, especially for the working class, urban and rural.

(2) To arouse a consciousness of the problems of human welfare.

(3) To develop latent leadership.

(4) To encourage work for the uplift of the working class through the creation of leadership among them.

A *clarification*.—The word "community" is so misused today by religious sectarians that it needs clarification. "Community" does not necessarily mean only a religious group. It is here used for a group of people living together in one neighbourhood, having a common interest and a common social background.

Approach.—In a city like Bombay, the Municipal Welfare Department and the Labour Welfare Department have organised welfare centres for workers. These are organized on the basis of community welfare work. Students of Bombay should offer their services to these welfare centres. It would be desirable for raw students to join these centres as members and then rise to leadership through gradual stages. This would be of help in getting acquainted with the working class population and in winning their confidence.

The following are model schemes for community welfare centres in urban areas. They may be adopted with necessary changes to suit the prevailing conditions.

Scheme of community welfare work.—A scheme of welfare work, when in full operation, will comprise the following four types of activities:—

1. *Recreational.*—Playground activities including organized games and sports, indoor games, and outdoor life.
2. *Literacy classes.*—Adult education, visual instruction, a manuscript magazine and a community bulletin.
3. *Cultural.*—Musical and dramatic circles, vocational clubs, etc.
4. *Social services.*—Creche, nursery, medical aid, library, employment bureau, etc., in urban areas; and industrial co-operatives, fair price shops, scientific farming, etc., in rural areas.

It is proposed, however, that instead of starting all activities right from the beginning, a policy of gradual and systematic development should be adopted. Such a policy would have the following advantages:—

1. It would leave sufficient time for each activity to take firm root, and would naturally lead from one to the other until all activities are in full operation. This would eliminate the disadvantages that usually attend the working of a scheme when it is imposed from above without inciting demand for a particular activity before it is introduced.

2. It would permit desirable or necessary changes in the details of a scheme on the basis of experience gained in the course of its gradual development.

To facilitate such gradual development, a period of twenty-four months will be found necessary before a whole scheme is put into work. The scheme is, therefore, divided into four parts, each corresponding to a period of six months.

In order that the scheme may receive the full benefit of this policy of gradual development, which if not properly followed would seem like a waste of time, the duty of the officer-in-charge during the course of this initial twenty-four months would be:—

1. To see that a natural demand and eagerness are created in the community for each activity to be introduced in accordance with the scheme.

2. To report any changes in details that he feels would be necessary for the proper execution of the scheme.

A FOUR PART PROGRAMME FOR AN URBAN COMMUNITY

PART I

Activities:—

(*a*) *Play ground Activities.*—The goal of the play centre should be to provide healthy, interesting and organized activities for children, with a view to develop their character, and prepare the young to become energetic, useful, healthy and social members of the community.

The aims of the play centre are as follows:—

(*i*) To provide indoor and outdoor games and other recreational activities to suit various age groups of both sexes.

(*ii*) To maintain good health and improve the physique of the younger generation.

(*iii*) To develop character and provide opportunity for leadership in the young.

(*iv*) To provide a healthy social life for members of the play ground.

(*v*) To encourage outdoor life and love fof nature.

The play centre should organize children residing in well-defined localities into play groups managed by themselves and organized, directed and supervised by persons who are friends of the young (students may take the place of these "friends").

The entire play centre should be treated as one unit; the play ground activities, however, will be carried on in proper groups divided according to age and sex where necessary. The age groups may be either three or four as suggested below:—

Adults	: 16 years and above
Middle group	: from 10 years to 16 years.
Children	: below 10 years of age.

or

Adults	: 18 years and above
Middle group	: (A) 14 years to 18 years.
	(B) 8 years to 14 years.
Children	: Below 8 years of age.

Play ground activities should include:—

(*i*) Individual games

(*ii*) Group games

(*iii*) Major Indian and Western games

(*iv*) Outdoor life

(*v*) Athletics

The major team games may include volley ball, basket ball, captain ball, dodge ball, cricket, hockey, foot ball, tennis, badminton, skittles, croquet, *hu-tu-tu*, *ata-pata*, *langri*, *kiti-kiti*, etc.

Athletics should be encouraged at early age, say six or seven years. Olympic events should be adjusted to age and sex groups.

Outdoor life for youth is essential in training for leadership and building character. Outdoor surroundings, outside the city or village, are ideal for the improvement of health and for creating stamina and endurance. Life in the open in an atmosphere of freedom inspires personal initiative and self-help and gives training in resourcefulness. A programme of outdoor life should include camping, tramping, hiking, cycling and swimming.

To encourage participation in all these activities, incentive in the form of annual and monthly group game competitions should be introduced. However, instead of giving prizes to individuals, it would be better if outings and picnics, in which youth are usually interested, are organized.

To ensure that the correct type of leadership is developed, opportunities should be given to young people to lead groups. They should also be given further training through talks and lectures.

(*b*) *Visual instruction.*—This should serve as one of the major methods through which adult education is imparted. Information so given should cover the following subjects:—

(*i*) Health and hygiene

(*ii*) Sex

(*iii*) Subjects closely connected to the life of the people

(*iv*) General information to widen vision and perspective

(*v*) Recreational films

This would also serve as a convenient means of interesting people in the work to be done.

(*c*) *Weekly leaders' training class.*—Monthly meetings of adults to ensure closer contact with parents and other elderly members of the community.

(*d*) *Indoor games.*

PART II

Activities :—

(*a*) *Organisation of mens' club* for recreation and lectures on family and community life, and *womens' club* for recreation, sewing and embroidery classes and other activities.

(*b*) Scout activities—drill, first aid, hiking, camping, etc.

(*c*) Dramatic club

(*d*) Debating union

(*e*) Reading room

(*f*) Literacy classes

(*g*) Music classes

(*h*) Provision of medical examination and medical aid for children and members of the play centre

Part III

Activities:—

(*a*) Kiddy club for children under 7 years of age, for 3 hours a day

(*b*) Boys' vocational club for carpentry, canework, fretwork, etc.

(*c*) Girls' vocational work for flower making, sewing, embroidery, etc.

(*d*) A manuscript magazine

Part IV

Activities:—

(*a*) Organizing a local Panchayat, representing community consciousness

(*b*) Organizing a creche

(*c*) Medical examination and aid for the whole community

(*d*) Annual sports

(*e*) Annual group game competition

(*f*) Annual camp

(*g*) Annual adult education lecture series

(*h*) Yearly exhibition of handicrafts made by members of the welfare centre

(*i*) A co-operative store of the community

(*j*) A credit Society

(*k*) Any other activity required by the community in its gradual growth.

All these activities may not be introduced at the same time. They may be started and stabilized gradually, as the need arises.

Staff required:—

(*i*) Organizer

(*ii*) Physical instructor

(*iii*) Assistant to physical instructor

(*iv*) Assistant for indoor games

(*v*) Part-time music teacher

(*vi*) Part-time Hindi teacher

(*vii*) Part-time English teacher

(*viii*) Two women's club workers

(*ix*) A man instructor for the boys' handicraft club

(*x*) A woman instructor for girls' handicraft club

Part-time leadership should be encouraged among members of the welfare centre, through the payment of a monthly honorarium.

Equipment for play ground (to start with):—

2 volley balls, 2 net stands and 4 poles

2 basket balls with poles and boards

2 dozen skipping ropes

6 continental balls

6 tennis balls (second hand)

1 cricket set

6 whistles

Lathis and other equipment for athletics

For indoor games:—

Carrom boards with pointers and strikers

Chance games

Snakes and ladders

Ludo

Chinese checkers

Ping-pong table with six bats and four balls

Chess boards

Draught boards

Choppat sets, etc.

For visual instruction:—

A magic lantern, a cinematograph, slide sets specially prepared for adult education, and a b by Kodak Film Machine. (All this equipment can be hired).

Musical instruments and radio:—

Stage equipment and loud speakers (if needed).

Books for the library, daily and weekly newspapers for the reading room.

All this equipment may be secured for the community from Government and Municipal authorities, and also from private sources. Members of the community should also be made to shoulder responsibility for providing community requirements according to their earning capacity.

An advisory committee:—

A type of housing committee comprising of two trained social workers, two educationalists, two architects, two lawyers and two doctors may be appointed as an advisory body to look into the living and sanitary conditions and other requirements of the community.

CHAPTER IV

STUDENTS AND LABOUR ORGANISATIONS

The field of labour organization is one that bristles with difficulties. The problem arising out of real conflict of interest between labour and employers of labour has been complicated further by past prejudices and grievances on both sides. A long, unhappy tradition of strained relationships between the two parties has made the situation exceedingly delicate and none but veterans dare handle it. And yet today, not even employers, except the most unenlightened ones, will dispute the desirability of a representative organization of labour.

Though students can possibly give no lead to existing organizations, they can do much to strengthen them. This strength has to be built up not only through enrolment of more members but through a systematic development of organizational activities. So far, emphasis has been laid only on the part labour organizations can play as bargaining and fighting bodies. Their chief appeal to members has been that they are a source of security—security from exploitation, maltreatment and loss of employment. But security is a negative aspect of life's needs, and more so when the emphasis is limited to security of economic life as against security from ill-health, ignorance and cramped growth. That this should be so is natural as the labour movement has not had time to look after anything except the barest needs of workers. Even where it may have had the time, it did not have the resources. An effort to provide for education, medical aid, legal aid and other facilities for the workers would have been more than could have been supported by available funds. This situation will always continue as long as labour organizations have to depend on the membership fees of individual workers and the meagre donations of none-too-prosperous sympathizers. But if these sympathizers—amongst whom are also a large number of students—cannot pay in terms of money, they can certainly pay in terms of service. As far as students are concerned, they can make a considerable contri-

bution in this direction, the only limitations being time and the willingness to work. Some ways in which students may help to strengthen these organizations are given below:—

1. *Increasing membership.*—The number of members in an organization is an indication of the confidence it commands within a particular group. The confidence of labour is the ultimate strength on which labour organizations must fall back ; it is their final sanction for all the demands put forth on behalf of the workers. Students can utilize their spare time in persuading more and more labourers to join their organizations. This is the most direct way in which students can help labour unions to strengthen themselves.

2. *Adult education and literacy classes.*—Other ways in which students can aid labour organizations are through persuading the latter to extend their activities and by offering their own services to conduct them. One such useful activity would be that of adult education.

Most factory workers have received only elementary education. Some, in fact, have not even been to school. For the benefit of these workers it would be of advantage to start adult education classes. No special plea need be made in favour of such an activity. Exactly what is missed in life by the individual who can neither read nor write is difficult to assess. The possibility of informing himself about day to day events through newspapers or of increasing his fund of knowledge through further reading does not exist for him. Adult education comprising of literacy classes, talks on current political events, study circles, informative lectures on such subjects as hygiene, home management, parental responsibilities, etc., should provide an opportunity for all workers to interest themselves in something more than gossip or the drab life in a chawl.

3. *Medical aid.*—A redeeming feature in this work is that some sort of provision is always made by either the employer, the Municipality or the state for all citizens in general and for workers in particular. The main obstacle is not so much a lack of proper arrangements as an apathy on the part of workers to take advantage of the available facilities. The first thing that students can do is to keep a vigilant eye on all workers

who are in need of medical care, either for themselves or for members of their families. Then they must secure the best treatment, available under the circumstances. Thus a student may help a worker in seeking the advice of a factory physician or go to an out-patient clinic. It would be worth while for the student to accompany the worker. Once a line of treatment has been suggested, the student should see that it is followed strictly. If there are any obstacles, *e. g.*, if the head of a family is asked to take complete rest, the student should see that he gets proper leave with pay, or arrange for family assistance through the employer, the trade union or through any charity organization. It should also be mentioned here that any instruction regarding diet, etc., should also be followed strictly.

Sometimes it is absolutely necessary to get a person admitted as an indoor patient for proper and efficient treatment. But workers hesitate to go in for indoor treatment as hospitals have come to be associated with death. Therefore, when a physician recommends indoor treatment, the student should persuade the worker on the advisability of the step. In this case, it would be the bounden duty of the student to make the necessary arrangements in the family in order to prevent the patient from worrying. Patients in the general ward of a hospital expect visitors every day to cheer them up. A patient greatly appreciates such presents as flowers, newspapers, weeklies, a humorous book, or even kind enquiries. Such visits to general hospitals can by themselves be good humanitarian work. It would be here that students come face to face with many human problems which they can understand.

It is a well known fact that these workers live mostly in slum areas. Bad housing conditions, unhealthy sanitary arrangements, and inadequate diet, bring about ill-health. Therefore, if students become self-appointed sanitary inspectors they can help workers to live a healthier life. They can also goad local public health departments into taking adequate measures to remedy the unhealthy surroundings.

Wherever possible, the aid of medical students should be sought in this department of social work, in order that it may become really useful.

4. *Legal aid.*—One among the many vexing problems that a worker has to face is litigation. The problem is even more complicated due to the ignorance of workers, the lack of time at their disposal and the eagerness of all and sundry connected with the legal and judicial machinery to exploit the litigants. A student can solve this by doing the simpler types of work himself, *e. g.*, by writing applications, drafting complaints, etc. When it is absolutely necessary to take the matter to a court of law, the student should direct the worker to a sympathetic lawyer.

In certain places there exist what are known as "Legal Aid Societies for the Poor" and students should keep in touch with such societies in order to help workers. Wherever such societies are not in existence, students should urge local ba- associations to organise them. Trade unions could also appoint a part-time lawyer to help and guide members of the union.

If students win the confidence of workers, they may help the latter to elect a Panchayat to decide and arbitrate many of their petty quarrels. In this way both parties would save time, energy and money.

5. *Co-operatives.*—Co-operatives have revolutionized the principles of production and consumption. This is a step toward the economic betterment of the masses. Students can render no better service than to organize such co-operatives. Thus the middle man—the exploiter—is eliminated. Co-operatives are of two types: (*a*) Producers' and (*b*) Consumers'. Students cannot afford to give all the time that a producers' co-operative demands of its organizers. But if they wish to undertake this type of work, they should get in touch with the "All India Industrial Co-operatives Association, Bombay."

Consumers' co-operatives could be organized for the sale of all essential requirements, such as grainshops, stores, etc. The organization of such co-operatives is very simple. Difficulties may be experienced only during the initial stages. Officials of registered co-operative societies who can guide such activities are to be found almost everywhere. The organization of such co-operatives would prove to be of great service

to the working class who would be able to get articles of daily life at a cheaper rate and also make some profit on their initial outlay of capital.

6. *Organization of independent labour.*—There are many groups of un-organized, independent workers who could be usefully organized into trade unions. The task of organizing is not very difficult and, hence, in our opinion, it may be undertaken by students with even limited resources of time at their disposal. Such un-organized, independent workers include shop assistants, tailors, shoe-makers, washermen, barbers, domestic servants, scavengers, etc. Such organisation work should be undertaken under the auspices of provincial trade unions. The main task of students would be to start such unions and allow local leadership to carry on the work.

7. *Organization of recreational activities.*—The daily life of the worker in India is so monotonous that the best service that can be done for him would be in terms of relief from monotony. This can be done by organizing recreational activities, both indoors and outdoors. The healthy influence of recreation will be found valuable in weaning disgruntled workers from alcohol and other unhealthy habits. The method of organizing such recreational activities is given in the chapter dealing with Community Welfare.

8. *Finally, another important service for workers* that can be rendered by students is research on their socio-economic conditions and agitation for a better deal for them on the basis of such studies. A detailed explanation of this type of activity is given in the chapter on Research and Publications.

These are a few suggestions for students who wish to do social work in the field of labour. These can be implemented with regard to local needs and conditions.

CHAPTER V

STUDENTS AND HEALTH WORK IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Any argument in favour of the need for health work in India is a superfluity. The permanent state of undernourishment, the exposure of millions of people to disease and epidemics, the high rate of mortality amongst infants and mothers, and the low figure of an average life expectancy, are arguments strong enough to convince any one of the immediate need for a health drive throughout the country. The problem of ill-health has its economic as well as its social aspects, but these do not lie strictly within the scope of health work. So long as the Indian masses have to continue at their present economic level, they will also continue to be undernourished, half-starved and physically under-developed. And, as long as a considerable portion of the masses are regarded and treated by the better-off as socially inferior and belonging to a lower caste, no appreciable change in their conditions and ways of life will be possible. Yet within the limitations set by this economic structure and its social counterpart, something may be done to lighten the darker shades of the picture. And we, as students, can play a significant part in the execution of this task.

What is health work.—Health work in its widest implications signifies the cure and prevention of ill-health and also the sponsorship of higher health standards in a community. The improvement of health standards may be achieved partly through prevention and cure and partly through carrying out a positive drive in the nature of a movement for physical culture. But such movements fall within the scope of play ground organizations and other welfare activities. The role that students could play in relation to these activities has been dealt with in Chapter III of this book. Here the comparatively negative part of the health work movement is considered.

The scope of work.—Curing persons who are already suffering from ill-health is the job of a specialist. But we can be of some help to this specialist. If good food, water, fresh air,

maintenance of an adequate temperature, sunlight and cleanliness are conditions precedent to acquiring good health, then supplying these very conditions is likely to speed up the process of recovery in the case of those who are unhealthy and ailing. Thus good food for a patient is not only nutritious food in adequate quantities, but also food that is easily assimilable ; a good water-supply is not only a supply of water that has been filtered and purified, but of water which has been boiled to rid it of all bacteria ; fresh air means fresh air in greater quantity than normal to allow for higher metabolism. The illiterate labourer from the field or the factory, with whom we would have to deal may not appreciate the full significance of these factors. It is our duty to make him realize their importance and to show to him how, within his means, he can provide them.

Students, in general, must find it extremely difficult to aid in the cure of those who are already suffering from disease or ill-health. Lack of expert knowledge and insufficiency of funds are limitations not easily overcome. Here the only service that can be rendered, even by an undergraduate medical student, is the directing of a patient to proper medical relief centres, such as hospitals and dispensaries, and arranging for such medical aid. Frequently such aid may not be available anywhere near the patient's residence and then the student is helpless. Besides the unavailability of medical aid, often there is difficulty arising out of the ignorance of people who do not even know when it is advisable for them to seek such aid. Students doing health work amongst such people will need to convince them of the benefits of taking precautionary measures in the early stages.

This, it may be said, is the work of adult education ; and it will be more so when the change is made from curative to preventive work. Measures for prevention must be based on a study of causation. Such a study would reveal that the causes of ill-health lie in two main directions—(*a*) causes relating to the individual, his way of life and his habits; and, (*b*) causes relating to the environment, the dwelling, the locality, the place of work, etc.

The importance of these two factors will be realized when the proposition is put thus : It is possible to conceive of an

individual with such unhygienic ways of life that even in the best physical environment he will contract disease ; it is also possible to conceive of an environment wherein an individual with even the best of hygienic habits may not be free from the danger of ill-health. Naturally, therefore, if the problem of ill-health is two-fold, its solution will also lie in two directions—(1) education of the individual for hygienic habits and better ways of living, and (2) propaganda in society for providing the poor with better dwellings and environments.

Programme.—According to the above analysis of the scope of work that we can undertake, our programme will consist of the following four activities:—

1. Surveying conditions of sanitation and hygiene in areas where the poor live

2. Making a plea for better conditions on the basis of the facts gathered in the above mentioned survey

3. Making individual families health-conscious and building up their hygienic habits

4. Aiding suffering individuals in finding adequate medical aid

5. Counselling relatives in methods of nursing and taking care of the patient.

To be effective, propaganda should be based on facts ; these facts being gathered in the course of a survey. Questionnaires collecting these facts will vary for rural and urban areas in detail and emphasis. Conditions for housing the poor are of significance in urban areas ; while the question of general rural hygiene assumes importance in the case of villages. A survey for village work, a plan of actual work that may be undertaken on the basis of that survey, and the organisation of this work have been dealt with partly in a note at the end of this chapter and partly in the chapter on Rural Reconstruction. Here, we shall consider the points that are important in a survey of city conditions. Assuming that we are surveying housing conditions of labour in Bombay, we would like to know about:—

1. *Physical surroundings.*—Are the immediate surroundings of labour dwellings hygienic—or are they in the vicinity of stables, or public urinals, or surrounded by marshes, swamps or ponds of stagnant water ?

2. *Physical structure*

(*a*) How big are the rooms ?

(*b*) What is the material out of which the walls are built ?—Do they afford security ?

(*c*) Is the roof leak-proof ?

(*d*) Is the floor paved or damp ?

(*e*) Are there any cracks in the flooring that make it impossible to keep the room clean ?

3. *Lighting.*—Sunlight is a disinfectant and a germicide ; it stimulates nutrition and is useful for preventing and checking rickets. The window area of a room should not be less than 10 per cent of the floor area. It should be placed so that all four corners of a room receive either direct or reflected light. From this point of view, is the room well-lighted ?

4. *Ventilation.*—Carbon-di-oxide, one of the constituents of the air we exhale, is harmful to health and should not remain in a room. There should be a constant inflow of fresh air. While fresh air is essential, direct draughts are not wholesome. From this point of view, is the room well-ventilated ? Is there an even current of air when the door is closed ?

5. *Sanitation and waste disposal.*—Besides the fact that undisposed waste makes a place look dirty and gives out a foul odour, it is also a breeding place for pathogenic bacteria.

Certain questions arise in this connection :

a. Are enough dust-bins supplied ? Is care taken to see that they are used ?

b. Are spittoons provided ? Are they used ?

c. Are sinks and flushes in order ?

d. Are sinks properly connected to main drains ?

e. Are there places in the drains where water leaks out and percolates into the ground ?

f. Are sinks and water-closets cleaned and treated with disinfectants at regular intervals ?

6. *Water supply.*—Is there a good water-supply ? The water supply should be pure and plentiful—pure, as it is to be used for drinking and cooking ; plentiful, on account of its indispensability for washing, cleaning, etc.

7. *Overcrowding.*—Are dwellings overcrowded ? Even a well-ventilated room is not a healthy dwelling place for more than a certain number of persons. Overcrowding should be prevented as it not only deprives the indwellers of privacy but is injurious to health.

8. *Privacy.*—Privacy is a necessity in family life. In a chawl, even if privacy is not possible for different members of a single house-hold, it should be ensured for different families. Low partitions, not reaching up to the roof, do not afford full privacy to the occupants.

General cleanliness and light in passages and stairways are other factors to be considered. There are many buildings where a torch has to be used to find one's way through a passage, even at 12 noon.

Propaganda.—It is only on the basis of facts that propaganda can be effective. The task of publicizing these facts would have to be undertaken by a Committee for Reasearch and Publications of the Students' Union. The purpose of this propaganda will not be to make sentimental appeals to the kindness and generosity of a few prosperous citizens but to make every individual conscious of the conditions under which labourers have to live. The plea for an amelioration of conditions is not a plea for charity but a plea for justice.

Education for healthy habits.—The purpose of educative activity in hygiene is to convince people of the need of good health habits, and to stimulate them to cultivate such habits and carry out measures that will secure good health and help them to remain healthy.

The way of education is that of persuasion, not of compulsion. Simple hygienic measures should be explained to the

people. It is only when they carry out these measures and thus avoid common diseases that the foundation for general hygienic work will have been laid. Persuading people to use mosquito nets in rural areas, to use boiled water for purposes of drinking, to stop polluting soil and water are fundamental changes in life habits and these changes can occur only after people have realized their necessity.

In the book entitled *Intensive Rural Hygiene Work in Netherlands India*, the author says : "A chronic disease is better in holding the attention of the people for the purpose of teaching hygiene and securing permanent interest in healtht work." He takes the example of the worm disease which is common even in our villages. "By securing in the people an understanding of the manner of spread of worm diseases, there is created the realization of the danger of soil pollution and a realization of the need of rendering human excrement harmless. It is then easier to explain the necessity of the use of latrines. Soon follows an opportunity to explain that the use of latrines is a step towards the prevention of all filth-borne diseases and then a little later may be begun an attempt to awaken an interest in further hygienic habits of life."

Information that should be conveyed to the people and in which their interest should be aroused is the following:—

1. How diseases spread (the diseases most common to the locality or region should be considered).
2. How hygiene helps to prevent them.
3. The need for cleanliness and personal health habits.
4. The need for community hygiene.
5. Elements of nutrition and balanced diet.
6. Knowledge of simple remedies.

Lectures, film-shows, and lantern-slides are some of the ways that have been used so far in the propagation of these ideas. But these ways have not been very effective. The only method that has yielded satisfactory results, according to the author of the book named above, has been that of establishing personal contacts through house visits which

is a most valuable form of education. It is a method which has been planned for the members of one household alone and should be used in the proper way. The special task of the volunteer is "to use his models, photographs, charts, etc., to make the people in a small group discuss the subject, with him." Public lectures, demonstrations, lantern lectures, and simple pamphlets may be utilised in addition to the house visit and not in its place.

Organisation of work

1. The Committee for Health, which should carry out this programme, should start by dividing the field into convenient sections, each section being constituted of one or more localities where the poor are housed.

The different municipal chawls and the housing provided by factory owners would serve as single separate sections. Where, however, two or more chawls are close to one another, they may be put together in one section.

2. Volunteers who enlist for this work should also be divided into different units, each unit consisting of not less than five and not more than seven volunteers.

3. Each section should be assigned to one of the units so formed. These units would have one leader through whom all instructions would be given.

4. The Committee should then contact the authorities concerned and inform them of the nature of the work they are willing to do.

5. The leader of the unit, with a letter from the committee, should see the local officer in charge of the section where he is to work, and try to elicit co-operation. This officer is usually the welfare organizer or the welfare officer of the place.

6. After the preliminaries are over, the leader and his group should try to establish close contact with the people among whom they have to work. This is best done by actively participating in the welfare activities that are conducted at the place, by being introduced to elderly persons in the group and by sharing their plan of work with them.

7. While this is being done, the unit may also start collecting the information necessary for a survey of local conditions.

8. This should be followed by adult education for better ways of life, by active demonstrations, and by aid in care of the suffering.

9. Supervision by the Health Committee over the progress of work done in each of these sections is essential. This may be effected through personal supervision as also through a regular checking of the reports sent by leaders.

10. Weekly conferences of the different leaders and fortnightly conferences of all the units would be of help in maintaining the necessary co-ordination.

Training of volunteers.—The Committee for Training Volunteers, or the Executive Committee, should arrange a series of lectures on the work of the Health Unit.

1. A background regarding the nature of their work; its purpose and possibilities.

2. The method and technique for surveys of hygienic conditions.

3. Elements of personal and community hygiene—rural hygiene in the case of rural health units.

4. Information regarding the outstanding symptoms of diseases prevailing in the area of work.

5. Information concerning neighbouring medical centres from where they may get aid.

6. Organization of their work and its relation to welfare and other types of work.

The scope of preventive work in villages.—The conditions of life in villages are in some respects better and in some respects worse than in cities. For instance, overcrowding, poor ventilation or bad lighting are not problems of any major importance

in village areas, whereas problems of inadequate and impure water supply, of insanitary conditions and of unhealthy surroundings should become targets against which preventive work should be directed. The nature of the survey which should precede this work will, therefore, lay emphasis on these problems.

The survey should begin with a study of the topography and physical relief of the area in which work is to be undertaken. This would help workers to get acquainted with the characteristic features of the region, of its high and low levels, and of its possibilities for natural drainage. Villages situated on hill slopes have an advantage over those on plains as the former have a very efficient system of natural drainage. Rain water as well as dirty water from sinks may be easily channelled out of the villages by a system of improvised gutters. When this is not done or where it is not possible, water sinks into the ground, accumulates in shallow ponds and ditches and becomes a breeding place of diseases.

The source of water supply, another place likely to breed disease, is the next item to be studied. The questions to be answered are : Is the water enough for the village ? and is it clean ? The water should be enough to meet the needs of villagers for washing, cleaning and drinking, and since it is to be used for drinking purposes, it should be guarded to prevent all possible chances of contamination. Some of the commonest ways in which drinking water is polluted is through the washing of clothes, cattle or human bodies in it. It is difficult to make the villagers see the relation between such practices and the spread of disease.

The habit of throwing household waste just outside one's door is a very common one and one that leads to unhygienic conditions in villages. The habit of using dust bins and keeping them covered should be inculcated. But it is not likely to be accepted with any great enthusiasm—especially by the grown-up population of a village.

The habit of allowing children to ease themselves in front of their own homes instead of in latrines or far out in the open fields, is another factor contributing to the spread of ill-

health. The fly that sits on the excreta also sits on the food that is served at home or on the eatable that is stocked by the local sweetmeat seller ; and the millions of bacteria that every fly carries on its wings are the bearers of a disease or an epidemic.

These habits betray an ignorance of the elements of community hygiene. Unfortunately, these habits have grown strong through daily practice, and cannot be removed overnight by a mere course of lectures on the principles of community hygiene. Then, there are also the bad habits relating to personal hygiene—such as spitting, not bathing regularly, general uncleanliness, etc.

The manner in which people may be persuaded to discard these habits in favour of better and healthier ones is that of practice and precept. Every member of the unit working in rural areas should himself scrupulously live up to the norms that he and his friends set up for the people.

This, together with persistent efforts over long periods of time, are likely to yield appreciable results. The methods that should be adopted for the spread and popularising of these ideas are not very different from those already discussed. The organization and co-ordination of these activities with the rest of the programme for rural reconstruction have been discussed in the chapter on Students and Rural Reconstruction.

The book entitled *Intensive Rural Hygiene Work in Netherlands India* published by the Government of Netherlands India is likely to be of special use to all workers in rural areas.

CHAPTER VI

STUDENTS AND RELIEF WORK

The need for relief work throughout our country hardly demands any emphasis. Catastrophes like floods, famines, cyclones and other forces of nature cause such frequent devastation in this land of ours that it appears as though they have become our heritage rather than unusual occurrences. Among the catastrophes experienced by India since the year 1900, the famines in Bengal, Bijapur and Travancore which occurred in the year 1943, stand out most conspicuously. As we recollect the grim tragedy that befell us then and shudder at the horror of that indescribable suffering which men had to undergo, we also remember with gratitude, pride and satisfaction those who selflessly devoted themselves to relieve the terrible suffering of humanity. Students, too, played a great role in this noble sacrifice. The commendable work of Bombay students during the explosion in the Bombay docks and the very brilliant work done by students during the famines in the above-mentioned places is a pointer in a desirable direction. We cannot, however, say that adequate relief was afforded in any of these instances. It is very clear that the work was handicapped at every stage for lack of properly organized structure for relief work, and also for want of sufficient trained personnel to carry out the projects. Yet, it may not be too much to say that students can indeed play a greater part in the formation of relief organizations in the country whenever necessary.

Relief work may be considered in the following broad aspects :—

1. Immediate relief.
2. Preventive measures.
3. Rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction.

Of these, the first is a temporary, short-term undertaking, while the others are long-term projects. It is only temporary relief work that students can hope to carry out.

We append below a scheme for relief work which may be conveniently adopted for a wide range of emergencies, though, obviously, no one theoretical scheme can meet the demands of every type of emergency. Necessary adjustments will have to be made to suit the individual catastrophe. Along with the scheme, the role that students may play in such an organization will also be described.

Organization.—In areas where there is sufficient public awareness in respect to social and philanthrophic work and where local leaders have influence over the people, it is quite likely that some organization will be in existence, that one will be started in times of need, for collecting funds and distributing them. In such areas students would do well to restrict themselves to two types of work. They are :—

(*a*) the collection of funds

(*b*) the running of a few relief centres with the resources made over to them by the Central Relief Committee in the area.

Where such awareness and initiative are lacking or where there is no organization set up to undertake relief work, students would do well to urge the local leaders to undertake the collection of funds and the organization of relief work on the lines suggested below.

So far as the collection of funds and the work of the central organizing committee are concerned, students should serve as volunteers. But so far as the management of individual relief centres is concerned, students may shoulder the entire responsibility.

Students should approach the leading individuals of a locality when the necessity for relief work arises during a crisis, and start work with them to raise funds by a common appeal. This association may be called the Central Relief Association.

At its first meeting the association should pass its constitution and elect its president and the vice-president. The president should be empowered to carry on the work of the Association with the help of an executive committee, the members of which are chosen by him. In this executive committee there should

be at least one member of the students' body who will act as a joint secretary to the committee. This joint secretary should also act as the liaison officer between the students' body and the central relief association. After this, the executive committee may meet periodically to receive reports, accounts, etc.

1. *Executive committee.*—It can choose its own office bearers and the district or branch officers-in-charge. It should meet at such intervals as may be decided upon, lay down the policy and give its rulings on doubtful points, and appoint, if necessary, sub-committees to deal with definite matters. It should appoint its bankers and other agents, decide on important contracts and allocate funds for the various relief measures to be undertaken. The day to day work involving technical knowledge or specialization may be conducted departmentally, whereas general relief may be given through various branches.

Staff : President,
Vice-president,
General secretary,
Office secretary,
Treasurer,
Chief medical officer,
Quartermaster,
Transport officer,
Information officer,
Inspectors,
Cashier,
Typist clerk,
Office-boys or messengers.

Functions : The general secretary and the office secretary, aided by a clerk, shall be in sole charge of office management, general correspondence, publication of reports, etc.

The treasurer, aided by the cashier, shall be in charge of finance. The daily financial transactions should be conducted

by the cashier. *Organization and Accounts of Relief Work* by J. C. Kumarappa should be a very useful guide in this part of the work.

The chief medical officer shall act as an adviser to the central relief association in the matter of medicines and medical equipments to be prescribed for the various relief centres.

The quartermaster shall be in charge of all stores and equipments belonging to the association. All contributions in kind, received by the Association, should first be taken charge of by the quartermaster. He should allot the quotas for various centres as sanctioned by the office and hand them over to the transport officer for onward despatch.

The transport officer should arrange for the despatch of stores from the central office to various branches and districts, and be in charge of arranging transport for evacuation, for requisitioning conveyances, etc.

The information officer should work in collaboration with the general secretary and the office secretary in accordance with the following plan:—The information officer should receive from district offices reports on the extent of damage done, the number of people killed, etc., and also about the amount of relief afforded by the association in various places. He should then collect statistical data from these reports and publish them, using this information when appealing to the public for funds and also when publishing reports of the work of the committee.

The inspector should act as a liaison officer between the central office and other relief centres and branches working under the central office. He should visit relief centres or branch and district offices and inspect the work conducted, check the accounts, note the handicaps and difficulties experienced in daily work. He should prepare an inspection report, with his recommendations or suggestions, in a special book to be maintained by each centre and branch. The same report should be reproduced in the inspection report book kept at the central office.

2. *District committee.*—Where the catastrophe affects a wide area covering, say, several districts, the central relief association may be called upon to start relief work over an extensive area. In that case the president, the vice-president or the general secretary should tour the affected areas and set up district relief committees which would be a semi-independent unit of the central association. Where the catastrophe covers only a small area, relief work may be conducted through several branches of the central relief association. We shall here consider an organization that can administer relief over the widest area conceivable. Necessary modifications in the organization can be easily made depending on the nature and extent of the calamity.

A district committee should be formed by selecting members from among the influential men of the locality. This committee should be independent of the influence of any political or communal group.

Functions : The district committee should form the nucleus around which relief centres can grow throughout the affected areas. The relief centres should be under the direct control of the district committee and transactions between the relief centres and the central office should be conducted through this office.

The district committee should start relief centres on its own initiative in the distressed areas lying under its jurisdiction. Although the general policy and programme of work will be laid down by the central office, the district committees should have the power of exercising discrimination over the actual method to be adopted for relief work, basing its action on the requirements of the locality and the resources available there.

The district committee should be allotted an imprest by the central relief association. Apart from the supply of materials, equipment, accessories, etc., which should be provided according to necessity, the district committee should also be authorised to collect funds locally, on behalf of the central relief association, and to spend the sums so raised by adjusting them against the imprest sanctioned.

All indents from relief centres should be sent first to the district office where they should be scrutinised on the basis of reports received about the damage caused and should be passed as a consolidated indent to the central office. The central office should then scrutinize and pass the indents and authorise the quartermaster to supply the articles. The quartermaster should pass the articles to the transport officer, who in turn will send them on to the district office. Then, the district office should despatch the articles to various centres. To facilitate work and to save time and lives, it is advised that a sufficient stock of available articles should be kept in the district office. The stock should be replenished whenever fresh stocks are received from the centre. Wherever possible the requisites should be purchased locally by the district quartermaster.

Staff : President,
Treasurer,
Secretary (to be appointed by the central office),
Assistant secretary,
Volunteers.

The treasurer should be in charge of finance, the daily financial transactions being carried out by the secretary and the assistant secretary.

The secretaries should manage the office, arrange for transport, take steps for the requisition of accommodation for starting relief centres, undertake necessary constructions, etc. On receiving indents from relief centres, they should check them and make up a consolidated indent to be sent to the central office for sanction and supply of articles. The allotment of funds to various centres should also be made by them. The data collected by the information sections of each of the relief centres, should be sent to the district office. A consolidated report should be forwarded to the central office at such intervals as may be decided upon.

The secretary should also inspect relief centres and enter his remarks in the inspection report books. A copy of the report should be sent to the central office and another kept in

the district office. Student volunteers should help the staff in every possible way.

Where the central medical department does not appoint medical officers for relief centres, the district office should be responsible for appointing such staff.

3. *Relief centres.*—Relief centres should be set up in the midst of distressed areas so that they can cater to the needs of the largest number of people possible. It hardly needs to be mentioned that transport facilities, communication, etc., should not be overlooked in selecting a place.

In order to render immediate relief, the work of the centres should be carried out through various sections, each of which should be established to perform a particular aspect of relief work. Mentioned below are the sections into which each relief centre may be divided. We hope that they will be able to cater to the immediate needs of the widest variety of catastrophes, though it is unlikely that they will serve all purposes in every case. Necessary adjustments should naturally be made in individual cases.

(*a*) Rescue section,
(*b*) Receiving section,
(*c*) Medical section,
(*d*) Food section (including mill canteens),
(*e*) Equipment section,
(*f*) Shelter,
(*g*) Evacuation section,
(*h*) Grain shop,
(*i*) Information section.

Each relief centre should be under the control of a superintendent who may be appointed either by the central office or by the district office. He should not be a student as his services will be required long after the need for immediate relief has ceased. The superintendent, assisted by the assistant superintendent, should control the entire office management. He should make estimates for all the requirements of his relief centre and forward the indents to the district office for approval.

The superintendent should also consolidate all reports submitted by the various workers of the information section and send them to the district office for transmission to the central office. Each relief centre should run on an imprest basis and the superintendents should be responsible for submitting monthly returns to the district office. The quartermaster should be in charge of all stores belonging to the relief centre. He should also act as the purchasing officer of the relief centre. The cashier should undertake the day to day financial transactions. The staff should be helped in every possible way by the volunteers.

Functions of the sections

(*a*) Rescue section : Where men are drowning, or where fire has broken out, men and materials must be saved first. This work should be done by the rescue section. The entire section should be divided into several squads or groups, each consisting of about 25 volunteers, with a leader at their head. All the squads should be controlled by the supervisor of the section. The entire section may be managed by students.

When actual rescue work has to be done, various squads should take up posts at different points and work independently. Those, among the rescued, who need immediate medical relief should be sent to the nearest medical aid centre and the rest should be looked after by the receiving section.

(*b*) Receiving section : This entire section should also be divided into several groups or squads with, say, 25 volunteers in each squad and the entire section should be under the control of a supervisor. This section, too, may be manned by students. Receiving squads should accompany rescue squads, and as people are rescued (after first aid treatments are given wherever necessary), they should be taken to the relief centre.

At the relief centre they should be received by other squads of the receiving section and, as far as possible and as completely as possible, the names and addresses of the people and of their relatives should be taken down. Anyone who needs medical aid should be sent to the medical section. The rest should be taken charge of by the appropriate section of the relief centre.

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(*f*) Shelter : This section should take charge of providing accommodation for distressed people. The construction or extension of shelters in the relief section should be undertaken by the superintendent only after consulation with the supervisor of this section.

In constructing shelters arrangements should be made for the segregation of people on the following basis :—

Orphans,
Males (adult),
Females (adult),
Aged,
Diseased.

This section should also look after all sanitary measures and should be in charge of the general supervision of the centre. The staff should consist of a supervisor, volunteers, sweepers, durwan, etc.

Those who need to be evacuated to other places should be transferred, at suitable periods, to a separate section where they can be taken care of by the evacuation section.

(g) Evacuation section : This section should arrange for all those who need to be evacuated or discharged. Arrangements should be made for these people in regard to transport, escorts, and rations.

The staff of this section should consist of an adequate number of volunteers with a supervisor. The entire staff should consist of students.

The supervisor should inform the superintendent, at a reasonably early period, of those who are to be evacuated so that arrangements may be made for their transport.

The volunteers in this section should be divided into three squads : (i) for transport arrangements, (ii) for escorts, and (iii) for rations. After arrangements have been made for transport, the supervisor should inform the respective squad leaders so that plans may be made for escorts and rations.

(*h*) Grain shop : This section should distribute food grains to those who do not or cannot come to the relief centre. The supply shall be made by giving away free dole, by distributing grains at reduced price or at cost price.

The staff of the section should consist of volunteers, under the control of a supervisor. All members should be students. Accurate accounts of the articles distributed by each method should be maintained.

(*i*) Information section : This section should send volunteers to collect data about the extent of damage done in the affected areas. It is desirable that a form for collecting data (depending on the nature of the catastrophe) should be prepared. It should include information about the number dead, the loss of cattle, the destruction of houses, etc., the items being decided according to the nature of the catastrophe. The supervisor should collect these reports from individual volunteers and submit them at regular intervals to the superintendent who in turn should forward them to the higher authorities.

The above-mentioned points are the approximate lines on which relief work may be organized. It must be understood that the technicalities involved in establishing such an organization cannot be listed comprehensively nor is there any need for it. However, one point must be stressed. The organization merely aims at immediate relief and not at any sort of rehabilitation work. Whatever the calamity may be, rehabilitation is always a long-term affair. It is unlikely that students, who form the entire body of volunteers in the above scheme, will be able to give their services for any length of time. The central relief association should therefore make arrangements to start rehabilitation programmes with the help of their own agents as soon as the immediate suffering caused by the calamity has been eased and thus gradually release the student volunteers. We shall not embark here on a discussion of the organization of a rehabilitation department, as it is impossible to visualise an elaborate scheme, and as we feel that it is out of our scope of endeavour.

Records : It is absolutely necessary for adequate records to be kept. All expenses should be shown on vouchers, signed by persons spending the money.

All section supervisors should submit daily returns in prescribed forms at fixed hours, on the same day or early on the following day. All articles required by various sections should be requisitioned by supervisors at least 24 hours in advance. All requirements should be made on indent forms. It would be advantageous to have forms of different colours for the different sections. The superintendent should scrutinise section reports and compare them with the daily returns submitted by the quartermaster.

Everyday financial transactions should be entered in ledgers that are signed by the superintendent before closing the day's accounts. All payments, made or received, should be shown on proper memoranda. A monthly return of accounts should be submitted to the district office by each superintendent. The district office should in turn submit a consolidated report to the central office. All contributions received by the district office and all expenditures should be shown separately each month. Contributions received should be properly acknowledged. The counterfoils of these receipts should be preserved in the central office.

We shall not deal with the maintenance of records in any great detail, but undesirable confusion should be avoided by maintaining proper accounts. The maintenance of accounts also ensures to a considerable degree, the equitable distribution of money and materials to people and prevents the misappropriation of articles. While it is desirable to lay sufficient stress on the maintenance of accounts, the rule should not be applied so rigorously as to hamper the efficiency of relief work itself, which is the main object.

CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

A short explanation, if not an apology, is necessary to justify the inclusion of this chapter in a plan for social work.

Any social work which claims to be scientific, deals with the causes and not merely with the symptoms of a social problem. The old-time social worker dealt with the latter because his knowledge of social evils was based upon relatively superficial and disconnected observations of life phenomena. The interpretations thus derived are coloured by individual prejudices and doctrines concerning life. Social services based only on these observations have often failed to bring about permanent results. For this reason, scientific investigation and social research are gradually being introduced into social work. Social research, today, has become an inseparable part of social work. This attempt to study factual conditions at first hand, before dealing with them, is a marked contribution to successful social work. There can be no better introduction than the actual survey of a given field of social work for the purpose of determining the real causes of social ill-health and planning a constructive programme of action. Through such a survey many social processes and their various relationships can be seen vividly and illustrations of different aspects of social phenomena, that textbooks discuss theoretically, can be obtained concretely.

Thus social research, consisting mainly of social, socio-economic and general surveys, will

1. Bring to light actual needs, and will help in the formulation of a programme of social action ;
2. Facilitate the actual work by furnishing first hand, comprehensive knowledge of the problem ;
3. Suggest improvement in approach, methods and planning ;
4. Help in co-ordinating activities in different fields.

Public sympathy and co-operation will be secured more easily and convincingly through the publication of facts and figures found as a result of these surveys.

The activities of the committee in charge of research and publications naturally fall into two groups, one concerning research and the other publications :

1. *Research*

(*a*) Exploring and planning research projects in actual practice means the taking into consideration of local needs. It may also mean the general survey of a village before starting a rural reconstruction centre. Or, it may mean finding out the percentage of literacy, the extent of indebtedness, the rate of infant mortality, the incidence of unemployment, etc.

No matter which of these subjects is chosen, the next step is to find out what relevant data are required for the successful handling of the problem. A questionnaire, eliciting the required information, should be prepared and given to those conducting the survey. To ensure an objective survey, a standardised questionnaire, preventing the entry of all possible personal errors and prejudices in the data, should be prepared.

The following basic points should be useful in preparing a questionnaire suiting the particular subject and the local news. This is meant mainly for a rural territorial unit but it may be suitably modified for other purposes.

i. Location and topography, with characteristic features of the place.

ii. Regional history: Origi , growth and development.

iii. Population: Total number, number of families, number of children, adults and the aged, sex ratio, proportions based on occupations, religions, classes and castes of people, number of births and deaths annually, and rate of infant mortality.

iv. Occupations—main and subsidiary (separate information on each). Season of occupation, the number of people engaged, hours of work, conditions of work, nature of work, raw material required, how and from where obtained, imple-

ments used and their source, nature and quantity of the product, whether consumed locally or exported, if so immediately or later, if stored how, where and when transported, means of transportation, when and where marketed, how marketed (directly, through co-operatives or through middlemen). The effect of subsidiary occupations on main ones and *vice versa* and the effect of both on people's lives. Are main and subsidiary occupations followed by the same persons or by different persons at the same time?

If the occupation is agriculture, besides the above data, information should be obtained on nature of soil, size of holding, and proprietorship. Information about the health and state of cattle-stock should also be secured in connection with the data on agriculture.

v. Economic conditions : Average annual income from main and subsidiary occupations (separate and total), sample family budgets, data on indebtedness in the village, its source and causes.

vi. Health : Sanitation and hygiene of the place, domestic hygiene, personal hygiene, medical aid (free or paid), housing conditions, and source of water supply.

vii. Education : Language, percentage of literacy, schooling available, influence of school on the life of the place, technical or craft education available, wastage in education.

viii. Social conditions : Religion, place and form of worship, traditions and customs, ceremonies, superstitions, annual festivals, priesthood ; marriage, morals, extent of divorce and desertion, remarriage ; recreations, seasonal and permanent, indoor and outdoor, for different age-groups and sex-groups.

A knowledge of the location and topography would be very useful in planning a programme of social work in terms of time and expenses and for special features such as recreational programmes, etc. It would breed familiarity with the place.

Just as a knowledge of location and topography would place the unit in its proper setting in terms of space, regional

history would give a proper perspective in terms of time. Factors that led to its development could be emphasized for further progress, while others that hindered could be minimised.

Population data would be useful in knowing the dominant element and in basing the programme on its psychology. It would also be of use in budgeting.

The organization of co-operatives and other programmes for economic amelioration require knowledge of the economic condition of the place. This would give an idea of the extent of the work needed and the nature of the steps to be taken.

Similarly, it would be immensely useful to know the actual health conditions before planning any programme for "better health" and "better education". This would give an idea of how much ground has to be covered and how much time, money and man-power would be required for the task.

Social conditions, if properly studied, would lead to an intimate knowledge of people and would further cultural progress.

This part of the work (the drafting and planning of a research project) can be done better if the chairman or the organizing secretaries of all the other six committees come together and work under the experienced guidance of some professor of sociology. Here, it should be stressed that the surveys ought to be purely diagnostic in character, and not too academic. The aim should be to find facts on which to base further work.

(*b*) The committee should take into consideration the fact that in carrying out research three things are necessary—personnel, money, and procedure,—or, to put it more explicitly, trained personnel, adequate finance and scientific procedure.

The personnel should be trained. Preferably, they should be from the six committees, should know their respective fields well, and, above all, should be trained social research workers. They should be in living touch with the people, without having to establish contacts after the questionnaire has been drafted.

In regard to finance, the only course open in the beginning is to appeal for public funds and to charitable institutions. Later, profits accruing from the publications of earlier findings and work done should suffice to meet the expenses of further work.

Publications should be useful in two ways :— (*i*) they will bring in money as a result of their sales, and (*ii*) they will serve to mobilise the sympathy of the public for further voluntary aid. But the main emphasis, here, is on the fact that research workers themselves should not be a burden on the scant resources of the committee. That is why only the minimum time possible should be spent in field surveys.

The third requisite, scientific procedure, is the most important. The first step in this procedure is sampling. As it is not possible to survey large territorial units or large groups of people, a scientific method has been devised to study only a sample of the groups. This saves both money and time. Random sampling is the easiest method. It consists in rearranging a whole group on paper, in a certain order, in which the position of the constituent is fixed without any personal bias. Then a methodical selection of the constituents of this rearranged group would give the required sample. An example should make this clear. If, for instance, a thousand people are to be studied, the names of these thousand should be arranged in alphabetic order and say, every tenth should be selected. The hundred, thus selected, would form the sample. In so far as our sample is a random one and not in any way biased by prejudices, we would be justified in assuming that the characteristic observed to be true of this sample, should also hold good for the larger group. Where, however, the group to be studied is made up of separate, smaller units which are homogeneous, and where the results are apt to be significantly affected by the independent nature of these units, then, the sample to be selected should be proportionately representative of each of the units making up the group. If, for instance, a fair sample of the population following different trades and occupations is to be obtained, the number of persons to be selected from each of these should be proportionate to the total number of persons that follow the

particular occupation or trade. This kind of sampling, however, is necessary only when the programme of work has to meet the needs of each of these units separately. For all general purposes random sampling is found to be satisfactory.

After sampling, the collection of data should begin. Students should approach people with informed but open minds. The questionnaire should be short and to the point, and as far as possible should not put any undue strain on the people concerned. Collection of data is followed by analysis and classification. This means (*i*) the sorting of data into categories on the basis of significant resemblances, (*ii*) the discovery of clusters of co-existent factors which occur again and again in similar phenomena, and (*iii*) the discovery of repeated, natural sequences in the events. The first objective, determination of classes extends into the other two also.

Mere classification itself would reduce the data to a few categories ; the discovery of groups of factors recurring simultaneously and frequently would suggest the existence of a causative organic relationship between them.

It is not the aim of students' research committees to discover or establish new laws in social dynamics ; but formulations of general tendencies on the lines suggested above should be of help in forming broad outlines on which further work could be based.

A detailed report of the surveys should be written at this stage and handed over to the planning committee. The findings and the proposed plan should be sent together for publication.

2. *Publications.*—Publication is the second important task that the committee must undertake. The work should be centralised, if necessary, in district or provincial units. This work is intended to serve four objectives :—

(*a*) To awaken the students to the need of constructive work.

(*b*) To encourage students to think and understand social problems.

(*c*) To arouse public sympathy and co-operation.

(*d*) To supply literature to the participants in constructive work, *e. g.*, the worker, the villager, etc.

Towards the fulfilment of these objectives three types of publications should be undertaken : (*i*) students' journal, (*ii*) popular pamphlets based on the findings of the research carried out, and(*iii*) literature for adult education.

The monthly journal should be an organ of the student movement, published by the students for the students. It should give a monthly review of the work done, of the work in hand and the work proposed. It should give a clear and convincing idea of the task to be done and the way to do it. The journal should at the same time appeal to and be a source of inspiration for the student world. It should be well-illustrated with eloquent photographs. Thus, it would serve to enlighten students and mobilise them for active work.

The journal should be the medium through which students may ventilate their views, make suggestions towards greater efficiency in the execution of work, and from stage to stage openly criticise and evaluate their work.

To win public sympathy and co-operation in terms of money, advice and other facilities, it is best to publish in the form of folders, pamphlets, brochures and booklets the actual research findings. Facts and figures should be presented graphically and pictorially in a form that will appeal and be understood. The findings, if put in contrast with the conditions in other advanced countries, would be effective. These publications should be sent to local bodies, responsible citizens and newspapers. The circulation should be very wide. A special sub-committee may be entrusted with this work. These publications should also be useful for students.

The third important function should be the supply of literature to the adult worker, the villager and the newly literate. Alphabetical and pictorial charts, wall newspapers, magazines and other periodicals should be prominent in the catalogue of publications. Small books, dealing with the work and

life of the people, should be specially written and published. The language should be simple and the type should be bold. They should be profusely illustrated. Civics, health, hygiene, care of children, home-keeping, and family-budgeting are some of the subjects which are eminently suited for publications of this type. Publications should be on a non-profit basis. The active co-operation of publishers who have the nation's interests at heart should render this task possible. Moreover, if the co-operation of students, who have a talent for art and literature, is sought, the work would be easy and efficient.

Thus, research should initiate the work students may undertake in particular areas, and publications should serve to co-ordinate their efforts in all directions.

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